

Finding the Silver Lining



Post Traumatic Growth

Posttraumatic growth is defined as, “positive change experienced as a result of the struggle with a major life crisis or a traumatic event” (Posttraumatic Research Group - University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2011). This growth is not due to the event itself, but rather due to the internal struggle that comes as a result of the experience. They clarified that the idea that the possibility of growth from suffering is in ancient writings as well as from more modern writers. What Calhoun and Tedeschi began was the systematic study of it. (1999) Growth and suffering, they say, are not mutually exclusive. This section will discuss the findings:

Changed Relationships with Others

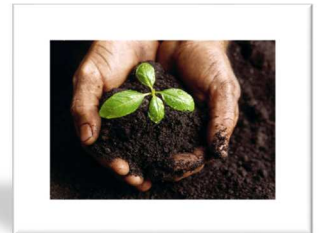
- ⇒ Increased intimacy and closeness
- ⇒ Self-disclosure – opening up and sharing thoughts and personal information
- ⇒ Talking about deeper issues more rather than surface conversations
- ⇒ A sense of freedom to expressing and showing emotions to others
- ⇒ Increased empathy and compassion for others who are facing challenges and crises
- ⇒ More likely to help others
- ⇒ Bonds with others who have had similar experiences

Changed Sense of Self

- ⇒ Increased awareness of inner strength – being aware that one is capable and can get through and handle difficulties
- ⇒ Increased self-reliance – belief that one can cope with life and perhaps develop an expertise in some areas
- ⇒ Increased sense of personal control
- ⇒ Increase in sense of competence

Changed Philosophy of Life

- ⇒ Increased appreciation for the value of everyday things
- ⇒ Shift in life priorities – not taking life for granted and living each day to the fullest
- ⇒ Recognition of the importance of relationships that may have been taken for granted in the past
- ⇒ Positive changes in spiritual and/or religious beliefs even after a period of losing faith or questioning beliefs
- ⇒ Positive changes in existential beliefs – developing and modifying beliefs about life and human existence



Nebraska's Network of Care: www.dhhs.ne.gov/networkofcare

Nebraska Family Helpline: 888-866-8660

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK